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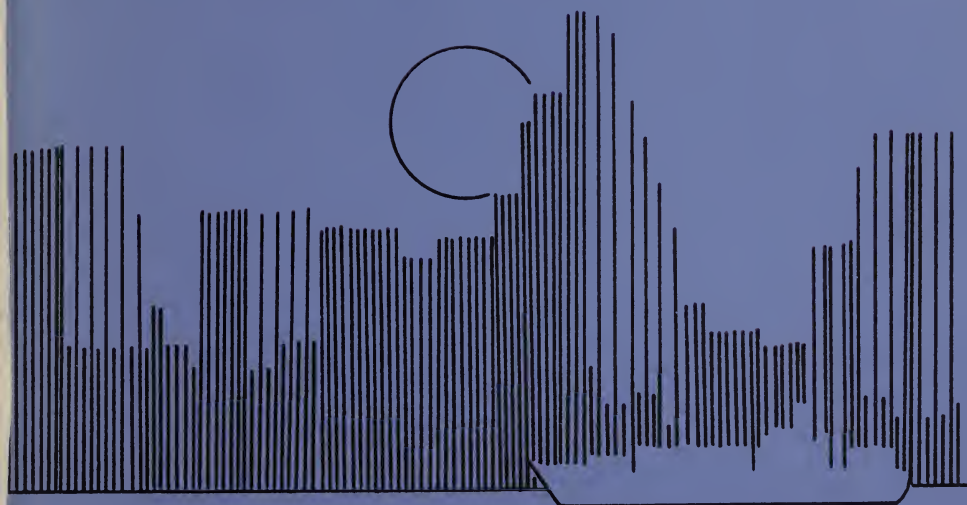
Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

FSIS-29

Exporting Meat and Poultry to the United States

A Guide to Country Eligibility

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Exporting Meat and Poultry to the United States

A Guide to Country Eligibility

Under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA), the United States inspects all meat and poultry products that are intended for human consumption and shipped in interstate and foreign commerce to assure they are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. The FMIA covers products that contain more than 3 percent raw meat derived from cattle, swine, sheep, goats, horses or other equines. The PPIA applies to poultry products that contain 2 percent or more cooked poultry derived from domesticated chickens, turkeys, geese or guineas. Under these laws, meat and poultry products may be imported only from countries with inspection systems at least equal to that of the United States. Requirements for importing meat and poultry products to the United States are described in part 327 (9CFR.327) of the Meat Inspection Regulations and part 381.195-.209 (9CFR.381) of the Poultry Inspection Regulations.

Products Under the Jurisdiction of the U. S. Food and Drug Administration

Fish, buffalo, rabbits, deer (venison), other wild game, and food products not covered by the FMIA or the PPIA are under the jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. FDA offices are located in major U. S. cities and are listed in local telephone directories under "U. S. Government." The FDA headquarters office can be contacted by writing to: Import Operations Unit, FDA, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20847, or by calling (301) 443-6553.

Food Safety and Inspection Service Responsibilities

The U. S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is responsible for Federal meat and poultry inspection in the United States, including the inspection of imports. **FSIS assures that imported meat and poultry products meet U. S. standards by requiring the exporting country to have a system of meat inspection equal to the U. S. system and to enforce all U.S. requirements for imported product.**

The agency reviews foreign inspection systems to assure they are at least equal to the U. S. system by comparing the laws and regulations of foreign countries with those of the United States, studying the structure and staffing of the foreign system, periodically reviewing plants certified to export to the United States, and inspecting an imported product before it enters U. S. commerce. Countries currently eligible to export meat, poultry, or both, to the United States are listed in the appendixes.

To become eligible to export meat and poultry to the United States, the chief official of a foreign inspection system must first make a formal request through the American Embassy to:

Foreign Programs Division
Food Safety and Inspection Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250

The Foreign Programs Division can be reached by telephone at (202) 447-7610, 447-6933 or 447-6971.

The country must furnish an official copy of its meat and/or poultry inspection regulations. If the regulations or other documents are written in a language other than English, an English translation should be provided.

Regulatory Equivalency

After receiving a country's formal request and a copy of its inspection regulations, officials of the Foreign Programs Division conduct a point-by-point comparison of the documents to evaluate their equivalency with U. S. regulations. The comparison of regulations is intended to be a joint effort by foreign meat and poultry inspection officials and FSIS representatives. To this end, the Foreign Programs Division has developed two compendiums—one for meat and one for poultry—to evaluate and document the equivalency of a foreign country's meat and poultry inspection regulations with those of the United States. Copies of the compendiums are available from the Foreign Programs Division.

Foreign regulations must impose requirements at least equal to those of the United States with respect to the following: (1) ante-mortem inspection of animals and post-mortem inspection of animal carcasses; (2) official controls by the national government over plant construction, facilities, and equipment; (3) direct and continuous supervision of slaughter activities and product preparation by competent, qualified inspectors employed, supervised, and paid by the country's central government; (4) separation of operations in certified plants from those in plants not certified; (5) maintenance of a single standard of inspection and sanitation throughout all certified plants; (6) official controls over condemned product; (7) reinspection of boneless meat; and (8) control over chemical and drug residues in meat and poultry products prepared for export to the United States.

FSIS may request that countries seeking recognition revise their regulations to achieve equivalency with U. S. regulations. In addition, once a system is recognized, the senior official of the foreign meat inspection system must inform FSIS of any changes in the country's regulations that might affect their equivalency with U. S. regulations.

U. S. Farm Bill of 1981

In passing the 1981 Farm Bill, the U. S. Congress amended the FMIA to require imported meat to meet residue testing and species verification standards equal to those required for domestic meat. To enable FSIS to determine compliance with this provision, the foreign inspection system must provide the following information on its program to control chemical and drug residues in meat products: (1) compounds tested for, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons, organophosphates, trace elements, sulfonamides, hormones, antibiotics, polychlorinated biphenyls, and other environmental contaminants; (2) official tolerance levels for residues; (3) sampling frequency; (4) species and tissues sampled; (5) laboratory equipment, residue testing methods, and minimum detection levels for each method of laboratory analysis used; (6) analytical data for each compound tested, including actual instrument printouts (chromatograms); and (7) procedures used to ensure quality control in official laboratories.

Onsite Review

After reviewing the data submitted, FSIS usually schedules an initial onsite review to evaluate all aspects of the country's program. U. S. officials observe actual operations to make sure the program is being effectively implemented. To fully determine the adequacy of the inspection program, a detailed understanding of the country's entire system to control and regulate various risks to meat or poultry wholesomeness is necessary. Therefore, at some point during the eligibility process, the country will be asked to complete questionnaires on pertinent phases of their system. This information will also help form the basis for effective continual review and evaluation after eligibility is granted.

Once FSIS officials determine that a foreign country qualifies to export meat, poultry, or both, to the United States, the country is added to the list of

eligible exporters. Notification of this action is published in the Federal Register and may be found in part 327.2(b) of the Meat Inspection Regulations and part 381.196(b) of the Poultry Products Inspection Regulations.

Individual Plant Certification

After a foreign country is declared eligible to export meat and poultry products to the United States, **foreign inspection officials may certify individual plants as meeting U.S. standards.** Only when such certification is received by FSIS may certified plants prepare products intended for export to the United States. The foreign inspection system must continuously inspect certified plants to assure that they meet U.S. standards. Foreign officials are also responsible for removing the certification of plants that do not comply with U.S. requirements.

Up-to-date information on certified plants may be obtained by contacting foreign inspection officials in individual countries or by contacting the Foreign Programs Division in Washington, DC.

Label Approval

Before shipping meat or poultry products to the United States, certified foreign plants must have their product labels approved by the FSIS Standards and Labeling Division. Product labels must be in English, comply with U.S. standards of identity, identify the country of origin, and give the net weight in avoirdupois measurements (pounds and ounces). More information on label requirements and copies of label approval forms can be obtained by calling the Standards and Labeling Division at (202) 447-6042, or by writing:

Standards and Labeling Division
Food Safety and Inspection Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250

Maintaining U. S. Standards

To assure that the foreign inspection system is maintaining an “equal to” system in certified plants, veterinary medical officers from the FSIS Foreign Programs Division periodically review activities of the foreign inspection programs and operations at certified plants. In addition, they check the country’s laboratories, warehouses, cold storage facilities, ports of lading, and other facilities or procedures that could affect the wholesomeness and identity of products. Any problems that relate to the inspection of product prepared for export to the United States will be discussed with inspection officials in the foreign country. If serious deficiencies are found during an onsite review of a plant, or if minor deficiencies have gone uncorrected despite warnings, FSIS may ask the country to remove the plant’s certification. This action—called delistment—remains in effect until all problems are corrected. If problems are not confined to individual plants but occur throughout the country’s inspection system, FSIS may withdraw the entire country’s eligibility to export products to the United States.

Import Restrictions

To protect the health of U. S. livestock, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service may restrict some products from importation into the United States. This decision is based on the type of product and on the animal disease status of each eligible country. For example, countries found to be infected with rinderpest or hoof-and-mouth disease are not permitted to export any fresh, chilled, or frozen meat from cattle, swine, sheep, or goats to the United States. The same restrictions apply to fresh, chilled or frozen poultry products from countries where viscerotropic velogenic Newcastle disease is known to exist. Current animal health restrictions are indicated in the appendixes.

For more information on specific restrictions, call (301) 436-8499 or write:

Import/Export Staff
Veterinary Services
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Federal Building
Hyattsville, MD 20782

Appendix A
Eligible Foreign Countries with Certified Plants (Active)
December 1984*

M—Meat products; P—Poultry products;
R—Product import restrictions by APHIS

Country	M	P	R	Chief of Meat Inspection
				Contact Point
Argentina	X		X	Servicio de Inspeccion de Productos Animales Servicio Nacional de Sanidad Animal (SENASA) Secretaria de Estado de Agricultura y Ganaderia Pasco Colon 922 1305 Buenos Aires, Argentina
Australia	X			Export Inspection Service Department of Primary Industry Canberra, A.C.T. 2600, Australia
Belgium	X		X	Administration de l'Hygiene Publique Inspection d'Hygiene, de l'Hygiene Alimentaire et de Nuisances, Cit� administrative de L'Etat Quartier Vesale 1010 Bruxelles, Belgium
Brazil	X		X	Divisao de Inspecao de Carnes e Derivados (DICAR/SIPA/SNAD/MA) Anexo do Edif�cio Ministerio da Agricultura 4 – o andar – Sala 420 – Ala Lesta Esplanada dos Ministerios Brasilia, Brazil
Canada	X	X		Meat Hygiene Division Food Production and Inspection Branch Agriculture Canada Halldon House, 2255 Carling Avenue Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y9, Canada
Costa Rica	X		X	Depto. de Inspeccion de Carne Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganaderia San Jose, Costa Rica
Czechoslovakia	X		X	State Veterinary Administration Ministry of Agriculture and Food Tesnov 17 110 01 Praha 1, Czechoslovakia

* Country eligibility, import restrictions, and the addresses of foreign inspection officials may change periodically. To obtain up-to-date information, contact the Foreign Programs Division, FSIS.

**M—Meat products; P—Poultry products;
R—Product import restrictions by APHIS**

Country	M	P	R	Chief of Meat Inspection
				Contact Point
Denmark				Meat Inspection Division Veterinary Directorate Frederiksgade 21 DK-1265 Copenhagen K., Denmark
El Salvador	X		X	Inspeccion de Productos de Origen Animal (IPOA) Centro de Desarrollo Ganadero Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganaderia Soyapango, El Salvador
England-Wales	X		X	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Tolworth Tower, Surbiton Surrey KT6 7DX, England
Finland	X			Division of Food Hygiene Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry Vuorikatu 16 00100 Helsinki 10, Finland
France	X	X	X	Service Veterinaire d'Hygiene Alimentaire Direction de la Qualite Ministere de l'Agriculture 175 Rue de Chevaleret 75646 Paris, France
Germany (Federal Republic of)	X		X	Der Bundesminister fuer Jugend, Familie and Gesundheit, Postfach 20 04 90 5300 Bonn 2, Federal Republic of Germany
Guatemala	X		X	Direccion General de Servicios Pecuarios Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganaderia y Alimentacion, Av. Reforma 8-60, Zona 9 Guatemala City, Guatemala
Honduras	X		X	Servicio de Inspeccion Oficial de Carne Secretaria de Recursos Naturales Bulevar Mira Flores Tegucigalpa, D.C., Honduras

**M—Meat products; P—Poultry products;
R—Product import restrictions by APHIS**

Country	M	P	R	Chief of Meat Inspection
				Contact Point
Hong Kong		X	X	Urban Services Department Central Government Offices West Wing, 12th Floor 11, Ice House Street, Hong Kong
Hungary	X		X	Department of Animal Health and Food Hygiene Ministry of Agriculture and Food Budapest, Hungary
Iceland	X			Ministry of Agriculture Post Box 110 Reykjavik, Iceland
Ireland (Eire)	X			Veterinary Services Department of Agriculture Agriculture House Dublin 2, Ireland
Israel		X	X	Veterinary Services and Animal Health Ministry of Agriculture P.O.B. 12, Beit—Dagan 50200 Israel
Italy	X		X	Direzione Generale Per L'Igiene Degli Alimenti e la Nutrizione, Ministerio della Sanita Palazzo Italia Rome, Italy
Netherlands	X		X	Veterinaire Dienst Ministerie Van Landbouw en Visserij Bezuidenhoutseweg 73, Postbust 20401 2500 EK 'S-Gravenhage, The Netherlands
New Zealand	X			Meat Division Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Dalmuir House, 114 The Terrace Wellington, New Zealand
Nicaragua	X		X	Servicio Inspeccion de Carnes Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario y Reforma Agraria, Gobierno de Reconstruccion Nacional Managua, Nicaragua

M— Meat products; P— Poultry products;
R— Product import restrictions by APHIS

Country	M	P	R	Chief of Meat Inspection
				Contact Point
Panama	X		X	Control de Alimentos y Vigilancia Veterinaria Ministerio de Salud Apartado Postal 2048 Panama 1, Panama
Poland	X		X	Sluzba Veterynaryjna Ministerstwo Rolnictwa i Gospodarki Zywnosciowej, Wspolna 30 71 Warsaw, Poland
Romania	X		X	Veterinary & Health Directorate Food Industry and Water Bucharest, Romania
Sweden	X			Food Production Division The National Food Administration Box 622 S-751 26 Uppsala, Sweden
Switzerland	X		X	Bundesamt fuer Veterinaerwesen Schwarzenburg Strasse 161 3097 Liebefeld-Berne, Switzerland
Taiwan	X		X	Bureau of Commodity Inspection and Quarantine Ministry of Economic Affairs 5, Hsu Chow Road Taipei, Taiwan
Uruguay	X		X	Direccion General de los Servicios Veterinarios Ministerio de Agricultura y Pesca Montevideo, Uruguay
Yugoslavia	X		X	Federal Veterinary Service Federal Committee for Agriculture Novi Beograd, Yugoslavia

Appendix B
Eligible Foreign Countries with No Certified Plants (Inactive)
December 1984*

M—Meat products; P—Poultry products;
R—Product import restrictions by APHIS

Country	M	P	R	Chief of Meat Inspection
				Contact Point
Austria	X		X	Federal Ministry of Health and Environmental Protection, Strubenring 1 Vienna 1010, Austria
Belize	X		X	Department of Agriculture P.O. Box 181 Belize City, Belize
Bulgaria	X		X	Ministry of Agriculture Bofia Blvd., Potev No. 55 Sofia, Bulgaria
Colombia	X		X	Animal Health Service Colombian Agriculture Institute Calle 27 #8-43, Piso 8 Bogota, Colombia
Japan	X		X	Ministry of Public Health and Welfare 1, 2-Chome, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku Tokyo, Japan
Luxembourg	X		X	Inspection General Veterinaire 89, Rue D'Anvers Luxembourg
Northern Ireland	X		X	Ministry of Agriculture Dundonald House Upper Newtownards Rd. Belfast 4, Northern Ireland
Norway	X		X	Veterinary Services Ministry of Agriculture P.O. Box 8007 Dep. Oslo 1, Norway
Paraguay	X		X	Division de Inspeccion e Industria Animal Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganaderia Asuncion, Paraguay
Scotland	X		X	Scottish Home and Health Department York Bldg., Queen Street Edinburgh, Scotland

* Country eligibility, import restrictions, and the addresses of foreign inspection officials may change periodically. To obtain up-to-date information, contact the Foreign Programs Division, FSIS.

M—Meat products; P—Poultry products;
R—Product import restrictions by APHIS

Country	M	P	R	Chief of Meat Inspection
				Contact Point
Spain	X		X	Direccion General de Veterinaria de Salud Public y Sanidad Ambiental, Ministerio de Sanidad y Seguridad Social Pasco del Prado 18-20 Madrid, Spain
Venezuela	X		X	Direccion General de Desarrollo Ganadero Ministerio de Agricultura y Cria Caracas, Venezuela

